

- Mr. Speaker, the majority's proposed budget for fiscal year 2012 undermines our nation's values and priorities- attacking our middle class, and in particular our nation's seniors.

- Today's seniors have a median income of only a little over \$19,000 a year. Both the Medicare and Medicaid program enables seniors to have health care coverage they would not otherwise be able to afford.

- The proposed budget would end the Medicare program as we know it under the guise of reform- threatening to turn it into a voucher program that will shift more and more costs to seniors and their families.

- The majority's budget also attacks seniors from another angle by proposing deep cuts to Medicaid, which serves as our nation's primary payer for long-term care services.

- Medicaid will be starved by shifting the costs of the program from the federal government to the states, which in turn could force seniors out of their own homes and communities into nursing homes.

- Before Medicare and Medicaid, nearly one-half of America's seniors were uninsured.

- Mr. Speaker, we cannot go back to the days of the past, we must be committed to strengthening and protecting Medicare and Medicaid for the well-being of our seniors and for future generations.